

Relationships and Sexuality Policy

MOAT PRIMARY SCHOOL LISNASKEA

The DE Circular 2013/16 states:

‘The Department requires each school to have in place its own written policy on how it will address the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education.’ The circular also states that Relationships and Sexuality Education ‘should be taught in harmony with the ethos of the school and reflect the moral and religious principles held by parents and school management authorities’.

Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) Policy

1 RATIONALE

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a lifelong process which encompasses the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills, and the development of attitudes, beliefs and values about personal and social relationships and gender issues. The learning process begins informally with our parents (or those holding parental responsibility) long before any formal education takes place at school.

2 OVERALL AIM

Relationships and Sexuality Education is firmly grounded in Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU), where the central focus is on the emotional development of children, health and safety, relationships with others, and the development of moral thinking, values and actions. The Northern Ireland Curriculum aims to *'empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives'*. We believe effective Relationships and Sexuality Education is essential if our children are to value themselves as individuals and are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives.

3 AIMS OF THE SCHOOL'S RSE PROGRAMME:

The school RSE programme, within the dimension of PDMU, will allow the pupils to:

- develop healthy and respectful friendships and relationships; examine and explore the various relationships which exist in their personal lives; learn how to develop and enjoy personal relationships and friendships which are based on responsibility and mutual respect; and build the foundations for developing more personal relationships in later life;
- make positive, responsible choices about themselves and others and the way they live their lives; form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework;
- value family life and marriage and appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood and promote an appreciation of the value of human life and the wonder of birth.

4 OPPORTUNITIES TO BE PROVIDED

We will provide the pupils with opportunities to:

- value themselves as unique individuals and respect themselves and others;
- begin to develop their own moral thinking and value systems;
- learn about friendships, healthy relationships and behaviours with others;
- recognise and communicate their feelings and emotions and those of others;
- learn about the changes that occur as they progress towards adolescence, particularly the emotional and physical changes at puberty; and learn about keeping themselves safe and know what to do or who to go to if they feel unsafe.

5 PRINCIPLES:

All pupils will be taught in an atmosphere of mutual respect, in a sensitive and inclusive manner, and in a way that is appropriate to the child's emotional and physical age and stage of development. We are mindful of the fact that our role must be considered to be complementary to that of parents/carers.

The value of a stable family life, marriage and the responsibilities of parenthood will be presented. As pupils mature, pupils will be encouraged to appreciate the importance of self-discipline, dignity, respect for themselves and others. Through PDMU and the World around Us, the pupils will learn about changes in their bodies as they grow older. Teachers will be aware of, and take into account, the variety of existing pupil knowledge, the different attitudes and beliefs and the pupil's capacity to understand the issues. It is particularly important for teaching staff to be aware of the fact that physical development may outstrip emotional maturity in the case of pupils with Special Needs and to accommodate this disparity in class lessons and experiences.

Resources used will be given careful selection by the principal and vice principal and the Board of Governors to ensure that they are inclusive and consistent with the school's moral and values framework. Staff will be updated on any considered programmes to inform planning and ensure relevance; how to deal with sensitive issues and respond to pupils' questions.

Confidentiality will be adhered to and any disclosures will be dealt with through the school's Safeguarding procedures.

Definition: Sexuality includes all aspects of the human person that relate to being male or female and is subject to change and development throughout life. Sexuality is an integral part of the human personality and has biological, cultural, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions. It especially concerns affectivity, the capacity to give and receive love; procreation and, in a more general way, the aptitude for forming relationships with others. It is a complex dimension of human life and relationships.

6 KEY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The RSE curriculum will enable pupils to:

- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of self;
- develop a positive sense of self-awareness, self-esteem and self-worth;
- develop an appreciation of the dignity, uniqueness and well-being of others;
- understand the nature, growth and development of relationships within families, in friendships and in wider contexts;
- develop an awareness of differing family patterns;
- develop strategies to make decisions, solve problems, and implement actions in various personal, social and health contexts;
- become aware of the variety of ways in which individuals grow and change and understand that their developing sexuality is an important aspect of self-identity;
- develop personal skills which will help to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships;

- develop some coping strategies to protect self and others from various forms of abuse;
- acquire and improve skills of communication and social interaction;
- acquire and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development;
- develop a critical understanding of external influences on lifestyles and decision making.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Pupils will also be helped to develop skills to critically evaluate the wide range of information, opinions, attitudes and values. They need opportunities to develop:

- **Practical skills** for everyday living; for supporting others; for future parenting;
- **Communication skills** learning to listen, listening to others' points of view; putting one's own view forward clearly and appropriately; giving and receiving feedback; handling and resolving conflict peacefully; being assertive;
- **Decision-making and problem-solving skills** for sensible choices made in the light of relevant information; making moral judgements about what to do in actual situations and putting these judgements into practice; acting responsibly and with initiative as an individual or as a member of a variety of groups;
- **Inter-personal skills** for managing relationships confidently and effectively; for developing as an effective group member or leader.

7 LINKS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

While much of the RSE programme will be delivered by staff within the normal confines of the classroom, the school will also host themed days e.g. Bee Safe Days biannually. The school will also make use of external bodies to support the delivery of RSE e.g. PSNI for Citizenship in Key Stage 2; Love for Life in Years 6 and 7. Other possible school initiatives in the future such as the Unicef UK Rights Respecting Schools Award will support and complement the delivery of RSE,

8. THE RSE PROGRAMME

FOUNDATION STAGE RSE Aspects of the PDMU Programme

In Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2 pupils will explore the following themes:

SELF-AWARENESS	FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS	HEALTH GROWTH AND CHANGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who they are, • what they can do, • identifying favourite things, • what makes them special 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beginning to recognise how they feel • knowing what to do if sad or lonely, afraid or angry • telling others about feelings • realising what makes people sad or unhappy, recognising how people feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being aware of caring for his/her own body • recognising good hygiene practices • understanding growth and change • exploring appropriate personal safety strategies, road safety, • medicines and drugs -safety rules
SAFETY	RELATIONSHIPS	SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES
<p>(how to keep safe in familiar and unfamiliar environments)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore appropriate personal safety strategies. • Identify situations that are safe and those where personal safety may be at risk. • Begin to realise the importance of road safety. • Understand that many substances can be dangerous. • Know the safety rules that apply when taking medicines. 	<p>(Their relationships with family and friends)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out about their own family. • Talk about what families do together. • Begin to recognise how they relate to adults and other children. • Identify who their friends are. • Explore what they do together. • Know how to treat others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to recognise the similarities and differences in Families and the wider community. • Understand that everyone is of equal worth and that it is acceptable to be different. • Celebrate special occasions

Resources:

Living, Learning Boxes 1 and 2; PATHS Programme

Roots of Empathy Programme; Respecting Difference Programme; Bee Safe Day; Road Safety Calendar;

Shared Education Relationships Days

KEY STAGE ONE RSE Aspects of the PDMU Programme

In Key Stage 1, Years 3 and 4 pupils will explore the following themes:

SELF-AWARENESS	FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS	HEALTH GROWTH AND CHANGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling positive about oneself • awareness of own strengths, abilities, qualities, personal preferences • recognising own feelings and emotions • recognising and managing the effects of strong feelings – anger, sadness, loss • acknowledging that everyone makes mistakes • recognising how they can develop and improve learning 	<p>(their own and other’s feelings and emotions and how their actions affect others)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to recognise, name and manage their feelings and emotions and realise that they are a natural, important and healthy part of being human. • Begin to recognise and manage the effects of strong feelings such as anger, sadness or loss. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising and valuing the options for healthy lifestyle • having respect for their bodies and those of others • being aware of the stages of human growth and development • recognising how responsibilities and relationships change as you grow older • understanding medicines and drugs • understanding that, if not used properly, all products can be dangerous • being aware that some diseases are infectious and some can be controlled
SAFETY	RELATIONSHIPS	SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know what to do or whom to seek help from when feeling unsafe. • Be aware of different forms of bullying and develop personal strategies to resist unwanted behaviour. • Explore rules for and ways of keeping safe on the roads. • Explore how to travel safely in cars and buses. • Know about the potential dangers and threats in the home and environment. • Develop simple safety rules and strategies to protect themselves from potentially dangerous situations. • Identify ways of protecting against extremes of weather-safety in the sun and in freezing conditions. 	<p>(and initiating mutually satisfying relationships)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the variety of roles in families and the contribution made by each member. • Be aware of their contribution to home and school life and the responsibilities this can bring. • Know how to be a good friend. • Understand that they can take on some responsibility in their family and friendship groups. 	<p>Appreciate ways we are similar and different e.g. age, culture, disability, gender, hobbies, race, religion, sporting interests, abilities and work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of their own cultural heritage, its traditions and its celebrations. • Recognise and value the culture and traditions of another group in the community. • Discuss the causes of conflict in their community and how they feel about it. • Be aware of the diversity of people around the world.
<p><i>Resources:</i> Living, Learning Boxes 3 and 4; PATHS Programme; Helping Hands Programme Bee Safe Day; Road Safety Calendar; Shared Education activities</p>		

KEY STAGE TWO RSE Aspects of the PDMU Programme

In Key Stage 2, Years 5, 6 and 7 pupils will explore the following themes:

SELF-AWARENESS	FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS	HEALTH GROWTH AND CHANGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing self-awareness, self-respect and self-esteem confidently express own views and opinions identify current strengths and weaknesses face problems and try to resolve them examine and explore own and others' feelings and emotions recognise, express and manage feelings in a positive and safe way develop insight into potential and capabilities reflect on progress and set goals identify and practise effective learning strategies 	<p>Examine and explore their own and others' feelings and emotions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know how to recognise, express and manage feelings in a positive and safe way. Recognise that feelings may change at times of change and loss. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle recognise what shapes positive mental health know about the harmful effects of tobacco, alcohol and other illicit and illegal substances understand that bacteria and viruses affect health and know that basic routines can be followed to minimise risks know how the body grows and develops be aware of physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty (Y6/7) be aware of the skills and importance of good parenting recognise how responsibilities change as they become older and more independent
SAFETY	RELATIONSHIPS	SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES
<p>Develop strategies to resist unwanted peer/sibling pressure and behaviour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise, discuss and understand the nature of bullying and the harm that can result. Become aware of the potential danger of relationships with strangers or acquaintances, including good and bad touches. Become aware of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> appropriate road use; applying the Green Cross Code; how conspicuity reduces road collisions; passenger skills including boarding/disembarking from cars and home to school transport; Develop a pro-active and responsible approach to safety. Know where, when and how to seek help. Be aware of basic emergency procedures and First aid 	<p>Examine and explore the different types of families that exist.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the benefits of friends and families. Find out about sources of help and support for individuals, families and groups. Explore and examine what influences their views, feelings and behaviour. Consider the challenges and issues that can arise: at home; at school; and between friends and how they can be avoided, lessened or resolved. 	<p>Examine and explore the different types of families that exist, the roles within them, and the different responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know about aspects of their cultural heritage, including the diversity of cultures that contribute to N.I. Recognise the similarities and differences between cultures in NI, for example food, clothes, symbols and celebrations. Acknowledge that people differ in what they believe is right or wrong. Recognise that people have different beliefs that shape the way they live. Develop an awareness of the experiences, lives and cultures of people in wider world. Recognise how injustice and inequality affect people's lives. Recognise the similarities/differences between different cultures of the wider world e.g. food, clothes, celebrations. Understand that differences/similarities between people arise from a number of factors, including cultural, ethnic, racial and religious diversity, gender and disability.

Resources:

Living, Learning Boxes 5, 6 and 7; PATHS Programme; Love for Life Programme; Citizenship Programmes; ABC Resuscitation Programme; Bee Safe Day; Road Safety Calendar; Shared Education activities

9. WITHDRAWAL FROM RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION

It is understandable that parents may be anxious about when, what and how their children will be taught in Relationships and Sexuality Education. The school will always seek to allay any fears. If an outside agency/individual is coming into the school to support the Relationships and Sexuality Education programme, parents or carers will be made aware in advance and have privy to the type of content and delivery of such. In the area of safety, the school will host awareness-raising workshops; and share resources to educate parents or carers on, how to ensure that their children are using social media safely and responsibly. In terms of Growing up and puberty, the school will host a *Love for Life* workshop for parents to outline the objectives and methodologies used.

If a parent or carer chooses to withdraw a child from all or part of Relationships and Sexuality Education, they must discuss the potentially detrimental effect that this can have on the child with the school. They should consider the social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood that the child will hear their peers' version of what happened or what was said in the classes, rather than the safe and reliable source of the teacher's. Ultimately, however, the school must respect the wishes of the parent or carer.

10. SUPPORT FOR PUPILS AND PARENTS ENCOUNTERING DIFFICULTY OR TRAUMA IN THE AREA OF RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY

The school will access support and advice for pupils and parents from the following services:

- Pupil and Personal Development services
- Play Therapy; Threshold Counselling; Women's Aid
- Knockavoe SEBD Centre
- WHSST and relevant therapists
- Adoption UK; Parenting NI; Family Mediation NI

11. LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

This policy complements and supports a range of other school policies including:

Positive Behaviour Policy; Anti-Bullying Policy (e.g. reference made to homophobic bullying, transgender bullying and cyberbullying); Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy; Pastoral Care Policy; Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling Policy; Special Educational Needs Policy; First Aid and the Administration of Medicines Policy; Health and Safety Policy; E Safety Policy; Intimate Care Policy; Drugs Policy and the school's PDMU Policy

DE: **Circular 2013/16**: Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy in Schools

DE: CRED and Equality and Diversity in Education Policies

12. POLICY FORMATION, CONSULTATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

The school's 2014 RSE policy was revisited following CEA 2015 Guidance. The policy has also been amended with details from the contribution now made from outside agencies which the school utilises in particular areas of the curriculum such as NSPCC/O2, Women's Aid, Barnardos PATHS Programme; Love for Life Programme.

We further recognise the importance of working in partnership with parents/carers in this area of personal development and thought it best to re-engage. This Policy was issued to all P6 and P7 Parents/Carers for feedback in March 2016.

The updated policy will be available on the school website and reviewed in light of any new guidance or legislation. Immediate feedback or any comments should be directed to the Principal and Secretary of the Board of Governors, Mrs F Humphreys.

We are committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of this policy. Specifically important to the RSE Programme are:

- Pupil and Parental feedback
- staff review and feedback
- further Departmental guidance and legislative changes

Signed: _____ (Chair of Board of Governors)

_____ (Principal)

Revised in March 2016; Reviewed in February 2017